



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 11th JULY 2018

PRESENT: Councillor J Oates (Chair), Councillors M Summers, C Cooke, R Ford, S Goodall, Dr S Peale and P Standen

CABINET: Councillor M Thurgood

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Jo Hutchison (Democratic and Elections Officer) and Ryan Keyte (Head of Legal & Democratic Services)

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Jay and Councillor B Price

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor M Summers and seconded by Councillor P Standen)

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

14 UPDATE FROM CHAIR

The Chair gave the following updates;

The Prayers to Full Council Working Group had provided its recommendations to the Committee in the report to be considered later on the meeting's agenda.

The Live Streaming/Webcasting Council Meetings Working Group had agreed action points and would continue to explore potential options.

The Support for Members Working Group had agreed to form three sub-groups to consider; member induction, IT support and ongoing support.

The Chair reported that following a meeting with the Chief Executive he would like the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to have a further opportunity to review the Committee's Work Plan at its next meeting.

15 2018/19 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for 2018/19 and no further items from the Forward Plan were identified for consideration by this Committee at this time.

16 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee received a presentation from Councillor M Thurgood, the Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director Assets on the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan requesting the support of the Committee to take the business plan before Cabinet.

The Assistant Director Neighbourhoods updated the Committee on the process which had been followed to date including the presentation to the Tenant Consultative Group. The Assistant Director reported that members had received several documents ahead of the meeting for their consideration, which included the Executive Summary of the HRA Business Plan Review and the Equality Impact Assessment HRA Business Plan Review.

The Assistant Director Neighbourhoods set out the reasons for maintaining the thirty year plan. It was reported that Government policy changes including the limitation on rent increases and the reinvigoration of the right to buy scheme had led to a forecast reduction of £180m over the business plan period. However, there remained borrowing headroom, and further opportunities could become available over the plan period. The intention of the plan was to provide a baseline position against which changes would be assessed, including the impact of Government policy.

The Assistant Director Neighbourhoods reported that the proposal to be recommended to Cabinet includes a HRA that would; maintain its minimum balances of £500,000; show a fully funded capital investment programme which would require debt funding in the later years; show an increased cost base in terms of such borrowing at the end of the 30 year period; and make full use of the

Council's right to buy attributable debts and local authority share receipts. The work undertaken showed that the baseline forecasts suggested a sustainable business plan even with the forecast reduction as a result of rent reduction and right to buy reinvigoration.

The Assistant Director Assets reported that the plan included provision to reinvest £298m over the plan period in the existing housing stock and that continued compliance with the Decent Homes Standard had been built into the plan. However further work would be undertaken through an asset condition survey which would help identify any areas where the assumed steady investment rate would be subject to significant variance. It was expected that the results of this survey would be available in spring 2019 and these would support the more detailed programme of works to the housing stock over the coming 3-5 years. The resources available in the business plan mean that the plan does not envisage the introduction of new stock (beyond the projects already in progress), without changing current activities. This need to prioritise activities had been explained to the Tenant Consultative Group, which was supportive of the establishment of a locally determined priority budget for neighbourhood renewal and local priorities.

The Committee considered the desirability of ensuring that the Council had projects ready to launch when funding became available, particularly through wider regional or national initiatives. Accordingly plans for regeneration of areas or assets which were not contained within the current business plan would need to be developed.

RESOLVED: That the Committee support the work developing the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and its presentation to Cabinet.

Councillor M Thurgood, the Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Assistant Director Assets left the meeting.

17 PRAYERS AT FULL COUNCIL

The Committee received the report of the Corporate Scrutiny Working Group to feed back on the working group's consideration of the inclusion of prayers at the start of full Council meetings. The Committee's approval was sought to make recommendations to the authority of Tamworth Borough Council on the inclusion of prayers at full Council.

RESOLVED That the following recommendations be made to Council:

In the light of modern times prayers should be held before the Mayor opens the formal part of a full council meeting

A signal to be given to either enter the chamber for a moment of reflection or to attend another room (committee room 2 gives access to the chamber) for prayer at 17:55, at 18:00 member will all enter the chamber

When the meeting is in order the Mayor is informed by the Deputy or assistant to make their entry in the traditional way

The Mayor opens the meeting with a 'thought of the day' style comment to remind attendees why the Council exists.

(Moved by Councillor J Oates and seconded by Councillor Dr S Peuple).

18 2018/19 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Chair reported that the next meeting of the Committee on 15th August was due to consider the Quarter 1 Performance Report and updates from working groups. In addition the Chair proposed that at the next meeting consideration be given to the Committee's Work Plan to ensure that the Committee monitored the effectiveness and any lessons which could be learnt from previous Council decisions.

19 RESTRICTED

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Moved by Councillor J Oates and seconded by Councillor M Summers).

20 LOCAL AUTHORITY TRADING COMPANY

RESOLVED: That a motion without notice under paragraph 9.1.11 to adjourn was passed.

(Moved by Councillor J Oates and seconded by Councillor S Goodall)

Chair